

OUR SOCIAL CHAT

All letters intended for this department should be addressed to "Aunt Jennie," care of The Progressive Farmer Raleigh, N. C.

Aunt Jennie's Letter.

Our letters this week are interesting, especially so, is the one from E., who appears for the first time in the Circle. Mrs. McKinney says that if she is old she loves young people, and enjoys their society. What a happy nature this sentence discloses! There are so many old people in the world who have seemingly forgotten that they were ever young and who frown at every light-hearted, buoyant act of youth, and continually drawl that things are not what they used to be, forgetting that they view the world and its people through two magnifying glasses now and of course every little indiscretion seems to them a tremendous sin, when in reality it was mere thoughtlessness, and time and experience will rectify it.

I attended the burial of an old friend yesterday who in his long and useful life won and kept the love of more children than it usually falls to the lot of man to meet in this life. In fact, he was the most universally beloved man I have ever known. The children who loved him thirty years ago are men and women now and they mingled their tears with those of their children beside his grave. There is always some good in a man whom the children love, and he was a model in which there was no flaw. Gentle, unassuming (in fact possessed of a diffidence which almost amounted to timidity) and "whose life was an open book" on whose pages there were no blots, therefore we do not wonder that he was so universally beloved.

While listening to the dull thud of the earth as it fell from the shovels I wondered when we should again see a man like him. My gaze involuntarily scanned the faces of those near me. I recognized the face of a man whom I knew as a boy and of whom I had expected much. He is young, vigorous and capable. Will he be buried and his departure deplored as this man's? The passing of good men and women always means a call to some younger persons to devote themselves more earnestly to self-sacrificing tasks.

The time for planting flowers is rapidly passing, and I hope that all readers of Social Chat are making arrangements to get all the beauty possible for house and yards this summer.

AUNT JENNIE.

P. S.—I must again remind contributors of the rule every writer should bear constantly in mind. When you write for Social Chat or for any other department of this or any other periodical, you must write on only one side of your paper. One or two correspondents seem to have forgotten this.

City Life vs. Country Life.

Dear Aunt Jennie:—This subject, "Country Life and City Life," has often been discussed, but I do not think that everything has been gotten out of it, because the city folks contend that city life is most comfortable and country folks prefer the country. But dealing impartially with the subject, I think country life best. Of course, in the city you are in close contact with the markets; you are close to church; you are in hearing distance of the school bell, and in these conditions city folk have the advantage of country folk. But the city boy or girl has greater temptations to shun than the country lad. There is where fashion rules, where all manner of vice and corruption abound. The country boy has a greater chance to found the true principles of manhood.

Of course the schools are not as convenient as in the city, but did you not know that there was such a thing as having everything too convenient? I have in view a young man who was always able to go to school, and never had to work any, not

even to feed the horses. His father was willing to do anything that the boy might get an education. And right here he missed it.

Country life is what you make it. It is an historical fact that nine-tenths of our great men came from the country. And you will notice, it is also an historical fact that nine-tenths of those boys who got everything they wanted made nothing. It will never do for a young man to get everything he wants; he must learn what it is to do without things. If he wants good books to read, set him about a job to earn them; then they will be better books when he gets them.

And again, you will notice in the city that business requires working young men to be toiling constantly, day after day, and receiving no recreation at all; many become discouraged, and pronounce life a failure. Every city boy and girl should spend a certain amount of the year in the country. You will notice that nearly all the Northern pleasure-seekers that come to the South go to the country. Why? Because it is free from the city's "glare and heat" and from the humming noise of industry. I don't say the cities are no good; we could not get along without them. And I am willing to acknowledge that most of the country boys are not so well read as the city boys, but I do say that the country boy possesses something the city boy is without. You will notice that the country boy will often go through college in two years, while it will take the city boy four years. It is also said that the country-bred man makes a better business man than the city youth, because the former has learned the art of self-dependence, and has learned that it is no shame to labor.

The country has for past generations been behind on improvements and conveniences, but we must remember it is fast progressing. It has the rural free delivery just the same as the city, and we can read the morning paper almost as soon as our city neighbors. It has consolidation of schools, and is establishing examples here in this county for the whole world. Local taxation is proving a blessing. The country lacks but one thing in educational affairs—compulsory education. Then the country will be almost a city. With these few scattering remarks, I close.

MAX.

Union Co., N. C.

The Husband and the Pocketbook Again.

Dear Aunt Jennie:—The pocket book subject is getting to be quite interesting. And as there are always two sides to every thing, we should consider both. So let's not lay all the blame of our thin pocketbooks to the man we call husband, for if we have married a real husband, and he has married a real wife, there will be very little trouble about the pocketbook.

If a husband sees that his wife does not spend his money foolishly, and is doing her duty to help him and to save his earnings, and the little she spends is for something worth buying, and not for something which adds neither comfort, pleasure nor attraction to self nor home, then a husband will not refuse her calls with a bluff and a door-slam. We, ourselves should not like to have the least mite of our little earnings spent, not having an idea how or where it goes.

There are women who would spend enough to live comfortably on, but let one try to give some account for it, and it can't be found. When the husband has finished his year's work he stops to see what he has spent and what he has on hand, and then is when he realizes what kind of wife he has.

It is impossible to make a husband out of every man, but as a general thing the wife makes the husband. If a woman marries a man worthy to be honored as husband and father, she can be so kind, so loving, so agreeable, so economical, she can make home a place so enjoyable with her own cheerfulness, that husband is always willing to

grant her everything possible to add pleasures and comforts to "us" and "our" home.

A woman has a great deal of influence over a man, and if she will use her influence in the right way, she is very apt to win. She can win love, or she can win hatred,—just which she desires. Perhaps some one will say: I am taking the opposite side of every subject. Well, maybe I am, but it's well enough to discuss both sides.

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Did any of you ever stop for just a minute and think of the many classes of people on this old earth—the many different works and minds and characters of people, some of which we consider extremely good and some extremely bad;—some who live to a ripe old age, some who die in their prime of life, some in their childhood or infancy? And yet every person who has ever been, or ever will be, or is now on earth, was sent here for some mission which no other can fill. An infant who has never spoken and who has never done the simplest deed, is taken to heaven, yet it has a mission here on earth, and it is filled. Why, perhaps mother or father would never have known their strong love for a child, or the giving them back to the great Creator, but for this, which has taught them both.

Every creature is for some purpose, and let's try to realize what it is and help each other to do it if in our power.

NELLIE.

Duplin Co., N. C.

On Making Home Pleasant.

Dear Aunt Jennie:—As the long, dreary winter is nearly over and spring is close by, and all things are beginning to take on new life, I will write to Social Chat. I have read so many good letters from the sisters this past winter, and have enjoyed them so much, and have thought all along, "Well, next week I will write;" but kept putting it off, for I knew there were so many that could write and did write such nice instructive letters that I felt that mine were not needed. But I am not going to let what little talent I have for writing rust. If I am old, I love young people and enjoy their society, and always like to see them have a good time, for we all know the burdens of this life will come to them all soon enough. I think parents ought to make home the most pleasant place for children and young folks, and for boys most of all. I don't think there would be so much crime if we could make our home circles pleasant and entertaining so the boys and girls would not want to go elsewhere to find pleasure. We all can't have fine homes and nice surroundings, but we can always have God's sunshine, and we can do the best we can, and I feel as if that were all we need to do. We, all of us parents, must be up and doing what we can to keep the young folks and make them to understand that they will have to take our places sooner or later. A great many parents seem to think that if they provide food and raiment for their children that that is all that is necessary for them to do. Oh, what a mistake! That is one of our pleasures, when we come to think of it. We must so live that our children can look back when they get away from us and their childhood home, not with sorrow but with pleasure. We will never forget our children, so let us try to make them good and happy.

I am so sorry to hear of the death of Harry Farmer. We readers of The Progressive Farmer will miss his good letters so much.

Love for Aunt Jennie and success for The Progressive Farmer.

MRS. N. H. McKINNEY.

Macon Co., N. C.

I was struck recently by a remark contained in a letter received by me—that the line of progress was always along the line of greatest resistance. This is a new way of looking at it, but it is true. Your work is in reality measured by the obstacles you overcome. It makes the race of life all the more worth running.—O. W. Holmes.